THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. C. THOMAS): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Setting up of Fast Track Courts

598. DR. A.R. KIDWAI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has critised 14 States which have defaulted in setting up of the requisite number of Fast Track Courts despite procuring full Central grant for the purpose;

(b) whether the Supreme Court had given six-week deadline in September, 2003 to establish the requisite number of FTCs and had warned the defaulting States to 'either do it now or face the consequences' of refunding the Central grant;

(c) if so, the latest position in this regard;

(d) the difficulties faced by them; and

(e) whether Supreme Court's order of refunding Central grant has been implemented by them or not?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. C. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The Supreme Court in its order dated 3.11.2003 in the case of Brij Mohan Lal vs. Union of India & Others has criticised 12 States, namely the States of Andhra Pradesh Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab and West Bengal for not setting up requisite number of Fast Track Courts and directed these states to make appointment of judges to remaining Fast Track Courts by 31st December, 2003. In case of default it may consider asking these states to refund the grant received by them from the Central Government.

(c) The deadline fixed by the Supreme Court has been communicated to the concerned State Governments for compliance.

(d) Among other things, finding accommodation for setting up of Fast Track Courts has been a major difficulty faced by the States.

(e) The Supreme Court has given deadline up to 31st December, 2003 for the States failing which it may consider asking the States to refund the grant received by them from the Central Government.